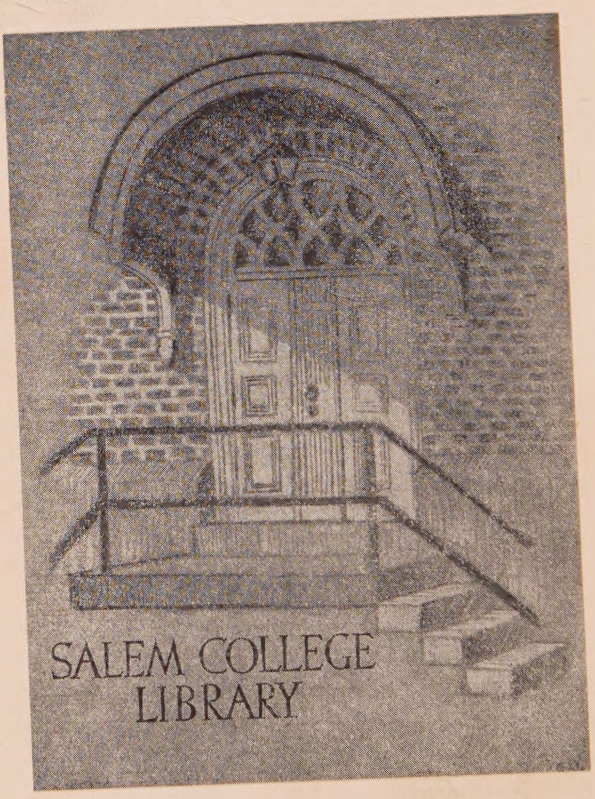
Poems
OF THE
Confederacy

BY

HENRY T. STANTON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Poems of the Confederacy

MAJOR HENRY T. STANTON

POEMS OF THE CONFEDERACY

BEING

SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS

OF

MAJOR HENRY T. STANTON

OF

KENTUCKY

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1900

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1900

The Little Boy Guiding the Plow

WHEN a bugle-note rang in the quivering trees,
And a drum beat the nation to arms,
Our people came up from the shore of the seas,
And away from their blue-mountain farms ;
All stalwart and strong as the hardy old pines,
Or the wave-breaking rocks of the shore,
They came in their long gleaming columns and lines,
Till the bugle-note sounded no more.
There are hearts in the ranks, as light as the foam ;
There are those of a gloomier brow ;
And some who have left but a mother at home,
With her little boy guiding the plow.

There are silver-haired men, the tide in their veins
Leaping down the red alleys of youth,
All fresh as the water-fall thrown to the plains,
And as pure as the beautiful truth ;
There are sons, too, and sires—the old and the young—
In the midnight and morning of life,

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The Little Boy Guiding the Plow

Who came from the hills and the valleys among,
To be first in the glorious strife ;
And many, how many, beneath the blue dome,
Are bending in solitude now,
To plead for the weal of a mother at home,
And her little boy guiding the plow !

Oh, the pang of his heart, and the keenest of all
That a wandering father may know,
Is the vision of home with its agony-call,
Its hunger and shivering woe ;
And who would not chafe in the sacredest chain
At a memory bitter as this,
Though he knew in his heart that each moment of pain
Would but hallow his future to bliss ?
And who would not weep in a vision of gloom,
When the Evil One whispered him how
The toil grew apace to the mother at home,
And her little boy guiding the plow ?

But courage, keep courage, oh, parent away !
Be noble, and faithful, and brave !
And the midnight shall pass, and the glorious day
Shall be shed over tyranny's grave !
Though a desolate thing is a fenceless farm,
And as dreary, a furrowless field,

The Little Boy Guiding the Plow

Still, God in his mercy shall strengthen the arm
Of the little boy asking a yield;
And the stubbornest clay shall be as the loam,
When the patriot spirit shall bow,
And ask for a friend to the mother at home,
And the little boy guiding the plow.

Oh, God will be kind to the needy and poor
Who shall suffer from tyranny's hand;
His foot-print shall be by the loneliest door,
And his bounty shall cover the land;
And broken the glebe in the valley and mead,
Where the poorest and weakest shall be,
And plenty shall spring of the promising seed,
Till a people shall live to be free;
And never, oh, never shall tyranny come,
With iron-bound bosom and brow —
May God give him back to the mother at home,
And her little boy guiding the plow!

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Sixty-Five

IF a nation hath not goodness then it never can be great,
For there's nothing like to virtue in the building of a State.
Though you bring your quarried marble from a multitude of miles,
And rear it into palaces and monumental piles ;
Though with dome and arch and column you may beautify the land,
Making earth and air and water pliant agents in your hand,
Still without the seal of virtue on the charter of your State,
In the eyes of Christian people you are neither good nor great ;
In the eyes of God Almighty you are only great in sin,
And he'll weigh you in the autumn when His Angel garners in.
Let us look a moment calmly o'er the little season gone ;
Let us mark the boggy places in the road we journey on :
There are others to come after in the path which we have trod,
Let us point them from the quicksand to the way upon the sod.

There were mighty throes upon us when we ushered in the year
Which yesterday in solemn shroud we saw upon its bier ;

Sixty-Five

There were throes as if a giant on our being bent a knee,
Admonishing of what we were and what we sought to be ;
We had coffers heavy laden, we had ships upon the brine,
We had fallow-lands and vineyards with their effervescing wine ;
We were strong and stern and haughty from the growth of years before,
And our plenitude of glory only made us crave the more :
Not such glory as the Christian, in the presence of his God,
Hath to come upon his spirit when he bows to kiss the rod ;
But the vanity of power and the strength of human pride,
That had made us scorn the virtues and the honors as they died :
So a hand was laid upon us, and our glory stripped away
As one might strip a flower-stem upon an autumn day.

We have conquered many battles, we have gained a world-renown,
We have driven gallant armies and have shaken cities down ;
We have laid a land in ashes, we have made a people slaves,
We have carried golden trophies from a citadel of graves ;
There's blood upon our bayonets and blood upon our guns,
And some of it's our brothers' blood and some of it's our sons'.
"What boots it how we triumphed so a victory was gained !
Who wears the whiter garment may expect to have it stained !"

Thus spoke we in our vanity, our ecstasy of pride,
As one who goes rejoicing o'er the grave of one that died ;
So climbed we up the pathway to the pinnacle of sin,
And o'er the gulf of darkness we were calmly looking in.

But the wrath of God was on us, and we felt His mighty hand
As he stripped the mad ambition of its garments in the land.
We were "proud and strong and haughty," but within a little day
We have seen our gilded treasures fast as bubbles float away :
We are wrecked in pride and fortune ; we were rich, and we are poor ;
There 's a coffin in our dwelling and a sexton at our door.

Let us turn the crimson pages in the record-book of war :
There are giant sins upon us, giant crimes to answer for :
There are cities laid in ashes, there are desolated farms ;
There are starving children crying in their helpless mothers' arms ;
There are widows, there are orphans, cold and homeless in the land,
With the husband and the father lying fleshless on the sand ;
There is woe and want and sorrow over all the Southern States ;
From within the nation's chamber, we can hear it at the gates ;

Yet our flags are flaunting bravely, and our music fills the air,
For the burthen of the sorrow it is not for us to bear ;
We have prison-cells and dungeons thickly peopled with the foe,
And some have on the gibbet died, and some are dying slow.

Such a fever and such passion over all the North has swept,
That though weeping MERCY pleaded, it hath never known she wept ;
And the vengeful cry for slaughter from the Puritanic crowd,
In the halls of central power hath an echo fierce and loud ;
From the Northern press and pulpit, from the bench and from the bar,
Cometh all the evil pleading of a fury after war.
And but a little while it seems, when frenzy ran so high
The nation by a gallows stood to see a woman die—
A woman weak and trembling and as guiltless as a child,
But a victim to the fury of a passion fierce and wild.
And here the high offended God put forth His hand again,
To write upon the nation's brow the burning mark of CAIN.
Again for WIRZ, the foreigner, a wretched feeble man,
But yesterday we filled his cup until it over-ran ;
And one by one we lessen them, these victims to our hate,
And there 's a thirst for human blood an ocean can not sate.

At our helm we had a despot, and for him this crimson tide,
A Nero who could revel while his better subjects died ;

But the Mighty Hand o'ertook him in his revel and his wrong,
And it taught us in our weakness that the Deity was strong.
There are those who call him martyr, there are those who call
him great:
After *passion* cometh *reason* — let the better spirits *wait;*
As the water finds its level, so the characters of men —
Some may die and be forgotten, some may die and live again.
There 's a gray-haired man in prison, under iron bolt and bar,
A relic and a trophy from the desolating war;
He was once a mighty leader, such as few are born to be;
He had armies in the nation, he had ships upon the sea;
But our strength in war was greater, for we crushed him with
our might,
And we watched his day of glory as it settled into night.
Now we hold him bound and shackled, with a palsy in his arm;
We have seized and sacked his temple, he is powerless for
harm.
But to crush and break his spirit, and to take away his all,
For the crime of Revolution was a punishment too small;
And the nation must have vengeance, for her women cry for
blood —
Though it runs a mighty torrent they would have it run a
flood.
God forgive them all their passion! God forgive them all
their sin!
From their hearts drive out the anger, and invoke the mercy in!

Sixty-Five

There 's another cry of sorrow from the liberated black ;
There is want among his children, and blood upon his track.
From his proper grade and level they have thought to lift
him up,
And he glories at their banquet with a poison in his cup.
From his love and from his labor they have taken him away,
And the gloomy night is crowding over all his sunny day.

We can hear him in the darkness giving out his bitter moan,
While for all the bread he asketh they have only found a
stone.
Let him freeze and let him hunger — they are blind and can
not see ;
It is food and cloth and shelter, and a glory to be FREE.
O ye great and godly Christians ! O ye Puritanic souls,
Have ye lost your human spirits ? are ye demons ? are ye
ghouls ?
Was it not enough to wreck him in his hopes and in his all,
That ye triumph so and revel at his miserable fall ?

Though the sins of all the nation in their multitude are great,
There are crimes as black and cruel in the records of our
State ;
For Kentucky (God forgive her), though she sought to do
the best,
From the black and base attrition grew as callous as the rest.

Sixty-Five

There were those who did her murder in the guise of right and law;
There's the blood of HUNT upon her, and of CORBIN and McGRAW;
And there 's such a cry of sorrow from the grave of bleeding LONG,
As should pale the cheek of hatred in its memory of the wrong.

* * * * * *

God forgive us all our errors! God forgive us all our crimes!
We have lived in sin and darkness — let us hope for better times.

Sixty-Six

PROLOGUE.

THERE 'S a sculptor for the marbles
Over all the buried years,
And his smooth and polished labor
In a line of white appears.

He hath cunning with the chisel,
And hath graved the record in,
Telling what the years departed
In their living-time have been.

He has now a greater labor,
Worthy all his better skill;
He has carved us many virtues —
Let him carve us now the ILL.

From the black Egyptian marble
Let him build a column high,
That the coming years may mark it
In their quiet passage by.

Sixty-Six

Never yet hath sculptor graven
More of crime or more of sin,
Than is better now for speaking
What this latter year hath been!

We are moving slowly onward
Through a vista-way of years;
We are looking to a future
Full of sorrow and of tears;

There is not a light to guide us,
Not a gleam upon the sky;
All our hopes are dead and buried,
All our joys have flitted by.

We are not the Christian nation
That we once were thought to be,
When with common voice we worshipped
"From the center to the sea."

We are not a godly people;
We are very far away
From the path that leadeth outward
To the everlasting day.

Sixty-Six

Let us see how much of virtue
We have left in all the store,
Where a world hath looked and wondered
In the happy days before.

Let us see how great and godly
Are the acts of those who take
On themselves the nation's ermine
For the troubled nation's sake.

First of all, we dare be tyrant —
We who thought the English sway
Over torn and trampled Erin
Should be rudely dashed away ;

We who wept for bleeding Poland,
And our Christian flag unfurled,
That its folds might flaunt defiance
Unto all a tyrant world.

We have learned another lesson
In the onward march of time,
And we build our greatest virtue
From the fabric of a crime ;

And we spurn aside the maxim
  That "your truer blood will show;"
That "he is most ignoble
  Who would trample on a foe."

* * * * *

We have swept our foreign legions
  Over all the Southern bands —
They were fewer than the Spartans,
  We were many as the sands —

And because of all their courage,
  All their stubbornness in fight,
All their pride of birth and section,
  All their love of human right,

We must put our feet upon them —
  We must crush and bend them low
Lest their better blood and breeding
  In the future "come to show."

This is Christian, this is proper,
  This is Puritanic law,
And we see the goodly future
  As our Plymouth fathers saw.

Sixty-Six

What are *they* that we should love them?
They are little of our kin;
Seldom yet hath Southern current
Let the Northern current in.

Proud of blood and proud of bearing,
Quick in anger to a foe,
Never yet hath given insult
Been without attendant blow.

We are calmer, better balanced,
We are cooler in our veins;
We have less of heart in battle,
More of calculating brains;

We are not a kindred people,
And the passage yet of years
Will not mix the Plymouth waters
With the blood of Cavaliers!

Next, we claim a godly power,
And we widen out our span
When we raise the apish negro
To the standard of a man.

Sixty-Six

This we do for godly reasons —
Such our early fathers gave,
"That the servant may be master,
And the master may be slave."

Thus we raise him from the level
To his greatest earthly goal,
And we take away his instinct,
And we give him back a soul —

Such a soul as we are given,
Such a soul as makes him great ;
He is worthy of the chancel,
He is worthy of the State !

He may come into our circles,
He may mingle with our blood,
He shall be our equal brother
As he was before the Flood.

Though the curse of God was on him,
Though he wandered in the land,
We would give him whitest vesture,
We would take him by the hand.

Sixty-Six

In the summer all our meadows
  Were a-bloom with scented hay,
And the corn upon our acres
  Spread its fullness far away ;

All the shadows of the woodland
  Were astir with heavy kine,
And the hill-sides gave their treasure
  From the rich Catawba vine.

Far indeed from cold and hunger,
  Far indeed from want and woe,
We are in the golden current,
  In the glory of its flow.

Let the people down below us,
  In the desolated land,
Starve and shiver in the palaces
  They built upon the sand ;

We have corn and wine and vesture —
  Let it rot and let it mould ;
They have nothing now to give us,
  Neither human love nor gold.

Sixty-Six

O ye rich and pampered people!
  O ye cold and cruel men!
They have crossed your swords in battle,
  They were one and you were ten!

Dare you press your heel upon them,
  When ye usher back the day
That your full and feasted legions
  Fled before the starving *Grey?*

Are ye cowards, are ye cravens
  That ye fear to let them live?
Can ye see a nation perish
  Whilst ye have the food to give?

They had richer fields and vineyards,
  Better homes and broader lands,
Till ye threw the torch among them
  From your desolating bands.

They were proof against your valor,
  They had better-tempered steel—
Think ye now your servant Hunger
  Will be proud to see them kneel.

Sixty-Six

Not to you, O callous stranger !
  Not to baser blood and birth
Will the true chivalric Southron
  Bend his knee upon the earth.

Better starve amid the ruins
  Of his fallen arch and dome !
Better die amid the ashes
  Of his violated home !

Not for cold nor not for hunger
  Will he kiss your iron rod :
There 's an altar for his kneeling,
  It is only to his God !

What of him who, great and noble,
  Stood so very long at bay,
Whilst the veterans drawn around him
  Left their crimson in the way ?

Still in bondage, still in prison,
  Living still yet near to death,
Never yet hath human being
  Drawn on earth a prouder breath.

Sixty-Six

First among his race and kindred,
  First among his noble clan,
He has taught a cruel nation
  How to suffer as a man.

All that cunning, all that malice,
  All that human hate can do,
All that any Christian martyr
  In his dying ever knew,

He has known and felt and suffered,
  And his spirit liveth still,
Something more than mortal courage,
  Something more than human will.

Oh, that they could learn to conquer!
  Oh, that they could come to know
How the truer way is opened
  To the bosom of a foe!

Not by bars of steel and iron,
  Not by rack and torture here,
Can ye force the higher spirit
  From its great and only sphere.

Sixty-Six

Throw your prison-gates asunder,
  Strike the iron from his hand,
Bid him walk the earth a freeman,
  Make him equal in the land ;

Show him first that you are noble,
  Let him see that you are brave,
Act no longer as a coward,
  Be not brutal as a slave.

While he lingers in the shackles
  He is master of you all,
He is freer than the sentry
  In your very prison-hall ;

He is better, prouder, freer
  Than the proudest of your State ;
He can teach you what is noble,
  He can show you what is great.

May the angels at his pillow
  Their undying vigils keep !
God preserve his Southern children,
  Who are praying as they weep !

* * * * *

Sixty-Six

As the fire hid in ashes
  Under mountains of the earth,
When its red volcanic lava
  Struggles into upper birth,

There are words that come unbidden,
  And the lips are burst apart
By a passion leaping upward
  From its covert in the heart.

Though we bury wrongs, to hide them
  From our own and other eyes,
There are those that in us quicken,
  For the spirit never dies ;

And upward from the charnel
  Come the living that were dead,
All the olden wounds upon them,
  All the marks of where they bled.

Oh, that crimes and wrongs were fewer !
  Oh, that men were better grown !
Oh, that veins had less of fever !
  Oh, that hearts had less of stone !

* * * * *

Sixty-Six

Brave Kentucky! brave, but laggard
  When her sisters gave their blood,
She has walked into the current
  With her bosom to the flood;

She has dared to give example
  To the cruel-hearted States,
When she meets her Southern children
  With a welcome at her gates.

Though a tyrant held her silent
  In the shadow of her guns,
She had all a mother's yearning
  For the glory of her sons;

And with chains upon her person,
  And a hand upon her mouth,
She had not a pulse within her
  But was beating for the South.

Better far than poor Missouri,
  Better far than Tennessee,
And Virginia, best of any,
  Better now than she.

Sixty-Six

Ah, Virginia ! torn and bleeding,
O'er the ashes of her dead
Let the tears of queenly woman
Be the requiem that is said.

Though they build no pallid marble
O'er the silence of their graves,
There are tombs in fairer bosoms
For Virginia's fallen braves.

Pass, oh seasons, spring and summer !
Come again, O winter cold !
TIME shall never lose the record,
TIME shall hear the story told !

Truth has more of spirit-feature,
Falsehood more of human cast ;
Nations yet unborn shall hear it,
Truth shall conquer at the last.

Lee

WE saw the fragile maiden, May,
Trip down the paths of morning,
And queen July in central day,
Her flower-throne adorning;

And weeping trees in sombre lines
Took up an anthem murmur,
When August, with her trailing vines,
Went out the gates of Summer.

Now yellow husks are on the grain,
And leaves are brown and sober,
And sundown clouds have caught again
The flush of ripe October;

We hear the woody hill-tops croon,
The airy maize-blades whisper,
The year is in its afternoon,
And leaf-bells ring the vesper.

What is it gives this gloaming-song
Its melancholy feature?
What is it makes our souls prolong
This monotone of nature?

Lee

What tearful grief is in our hearts —
  What swaying under-reason?
What sorrow real now imparts
  Its spirit to the season?

The crisping leaves may shoal the ways,
  The sun turn down the heavens —
Still all the years have fading days,
  And all the days have evens:

Enough — whatever else may be —
  That in this autumn weather,
The verdure of the world and LEE
  Have silent fled together.

So prone are men where'er they move
  To tread the ways of evil,
They seldom hold their kind above
  A common grade and level;

But LEE, beside his fellow-man,
  Stood, over all, a giant —
The higher type — the perfect plan —
  God fearing, God-reliant.

Lee

A giant not alone in fields
  Where bent the sanguine Reaper,
Where Death threw o'er his harvest-yields
  An autumn crimson deeper;

But with an iron strength of will
  He sought his life to fashion;
He held his ruder pulses still,
  And closed the gates of passion.

There have been men whose mighty deeds,
  On cold historic pages,
Are driven like October seeds
  Along the reaching ages;

Whose statues stand like sentinels,
  On whited shafts and bases,
Whose ashes rest in marble cells,
  And sepulchres and vases;

But he who in this autumn time
  Was lost beyond the river,
Has found a glory-path to climb,
  Forever and forever!

And monumental marble here,
With deeds of honor graven,
What can it be to one so near
The inner gates of Heaven?

By still Potomac's margin dun,
Where shrilly calls the plover,
Where lean the heights of Arlington
Its glassing waters over,

No autumn voices haunt the moles,
No breezy covert ripples,
No longer whirl the leaves in shoals
Beneath the stately maples;

Some vandal's axe has shorn the crest,
The woody slopes are shaven,
No longer builds the dove her nest
Where mournful croaks the raven;

But down the Southland's fruity plain
The leaves are all a-quiver,
And *there* his memory shall reign
Forever and forever!

Heroic Sleep

WITHIN this closed and darkened earth
All seeds of being lie,
That, in good time, find light and birth,
To blossom and to die ;
To blossom and to fruit and turn
Again to whence they came,
To give their ashes to an urn
Where ash comes back to flame.

Such is the law of life and death —
The law that nature gives —
Man comes from earth to one short breath,
And dies while yet he lives ;
For in this universe of parts
One part completes the whole,
With varied minds, with varied hearts,
There 's one unvaried soul.

In all our states of being here,
From summer's dawn to frost,
From dark to light, from birth to bier,
No part of soul is lost ;
A system grand goes on and on,
With true, untiring wheels,
And that which in our night is gone,
Our morrow's sun reveals.

Heroic Sleep

There is no finite mind that solves
  This problem of God's plan ;
We know not if our life evolves
  From mollusk up to man ;
We can not trace an atom's course,
  Above or under earth,
We can not find in vital force
  Its secret springs of birth.

Mayhap a thousand million years
  Have been since humankind
Came crowding on this sphere of spheres,
  With mastery of mind ;
We may not tell, we can not know,
  What space has been since then,
Though buried ages rise to show
  Their prehistoric men.

A monolith left here and there
  In isolation stands ;
An obelisk that spears the air
  Gleams out of drifted sands ;
On ancient Egypt's fruitless waste
  Vast pyramids are piled,
That prove how perished races graced
  A spot that one time smiled.

Heroic Sleep

Throughout this thousand million years
That may, perhaps, have sped,
At intervals some mark appears
Above the honored dead ;
Some mark of issues lost, or won,
With great men stricken down,
Some proof of sanguine war-work done
For subject, or for crown.

That martial pulse which men now feel,
Throbbed in the cycles gone,
And battles waged with stone and steel,
For human pride went on.
We look not back from this new day
For good or ill so wrought —
Sufficient that their granites say,
"Here rest the men who fought."

Whilst yet our Aryan race is young,
To these long lines of stone,
New hills and vales, and plains among,
We proudly add our own —
We leave our marks of contests red,
Of battles fought too well,
And rear our piles to heroes dead
This glory-tale to tell.

Heroic Sleep

Where bright Potomac in the sun,
A plate of silver lies,
Our marble shaft to Washington
Goes out to pierce the skies ;
An obelisk that stands and waits
New centuries of sun,
Compiled of stones from sovereign States,
He moulded into one.

There stands a mark at Bunker Hill,
On grand historic ground,
That proves how in the rebel still
The patriot is found ;
And everywhere about this land
These summer sunbeams slant,
On polished marble stones that stand
To Lincoln, Lee, and Grant.

For men who fought in all our wars,
And gave their valiant blood,
To glow in after-time, like Mars
O'er life's enduring flood ;
For noble men on every field,
To honor's cause allied,
Whose truth and glory stand revealed
In that they fought and died.

Heroic Sleep

That after years and after man
May find a stone-mark here,
Of strife 'twixt Northern Puritan
And Southern Cavalier ;
That centuries anon may see
How man to-day was brave,
This speaking pile is placed to be
A guide-post to his grave.

This granite stands for men who fought,
As men heroic must,
Who loves his land, and has no thought
But that his cause is just ;
This mark is such as valor plans
For spirit such as hers,
Set up by victor Puritans
For vanquished Cavaliers.

It may not be that deathless pile
Of Egypt's brazen clime,
Nor yet that Needle of the Nile,
From out the sands of time ;
But it will stand while men believe
That glory fits the brave,
While flowers bloom, while women grieve
Beside the hero's grave.

Heroic Sleep

Six thousand men lie buried here
Who from their prison close
Were borne upon a soldier's bier
To rest among their foes ;
No mother's tears, no wife's bewail,
No child's pathetic cry ;
No home friend near to list his tale
Or watch the soldier die.

At martial hands their graves were made,
Their coffins rudely drest,
And valiant soldiers gently laid
Their foemen down to rest ;
And thus the brotherhood of man
Is grandly proven here —
It puts aside the Puritan,
Blots out the Cavalier.

This kinship of the hero lives,
Estrange it how you will ;
The soldier to the soldier gives
His meed of honor still ;
No matter what the cause may be,
If wrongful or if just,
Chivalric foemen only see
True valor in the dust.

Heroic Sleep

The coward puts his spurning feet
Upon a foeman's grave ;
That base-blood cry, "Revenge is sweet,"
Came never from the brave ;
And truer manhood noblest shows
Among ignoble hordes,
When victors to their vanquished foes
Hand back the yielded swords.

This honor done on Northern soil
To Southern soldiers dead,
In days to come shall prove a foil
To blood by brothers shed ;
Shall stand before our children's eyes,
A proof that courage shows
The best where it can recognize
The manhood of its foes.

When faction lives and heat begins,
And naught save war avails,
Comes revolution, where it wins,
Rebellion, where it fails ;
And from this rule of wrathfulness,
When blood-bound peoples meet,
The patriot is in success,
The traitor in defeat.

Heroic Sleep

When from proud England's iron sway
Our liberties we tore,
Her stigma, "rebel," died away—
Her "traitor" lived no more.
With man to man in conflict met,
And war's great havoc done,
There came an end to epithet
When rebel-traitors won.

With fast-subsiding passion here
From internecine strife,
The Puritan and Cavalier
Are lost in newer life;
Our days of perfect peace are on,
Our compact made anew,
And every shade of grey has gone
To mingle with the blue.

No more reproach, the end has come,
The argument is o'er,
In North and South the calling drum
Shall be for us no more—
The banner of St. Andrew's cross
In silent dust is lain,
And what has been a section's loss
Shall prove a nation's gain.

Heroic Sleep

While yon unbelted soldier bends
  Above this granite base,
Our land shall be the home of friends
  Where peace upholds its mace ;
Where martial lines shall never stand
  With gleaming sword and gun,
Until, in service of our land,
  We march to fight as one.

Nor Puritan, nor Cavalier,
  A home-grown strife shall see,
While o'er the soldiers resting
  The granite shaft shall be ;
With all of bitterness forgot,
  With all of taunting done,
Columbia is freedom's spot —
  Its sovereign States are one.

We 've had our change from life to death,
  And back from death to life ;
The law of nature gave us breath,
  And with it pride and strife ;
We came from earth to bloom and fruit,
  With mastery of mind ;
We 've held our kingdom o'er the brute
  As gracious God designed.

Heroic Sleep

And still we keep the atom's place
In this grand system here —
We die and live again, through grace,
Immortal in our sphere ;
We fall, and find our rest in earth,
Where seeds in darkness lie,
Where all things fall and come to birth
And seem again to die.

There is no finite mind that solves
The problem of this plan ;
We can not know how God evolves
His fragile creature, man ;
We only know that while we live
The law of God is just,
And what we take from earth we give,
In tribute, back to dust.

And granite monuments, that stand
Through Time's untiring roll,
Are only guide-posts on the land
To show the course of soul ;
For human substance goes to earth,
Whence human passions rise,
But soul with God himself had birth,
And lives and never dies.

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